TITLE OF INVENTION

Exhibit Framing System

CONTROL METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR FRAMING EXHIBITS

NAME OF INVENTOR

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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not Applicable

REFERENCE TO A MICROFICHE APPENDIX

Not Applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The fields of invention as classified under U.S. patent *Classification Definitions* or the subject matter of the claimed invention is:

G	020	A	4/2/91 Picture frames
G	016	A	4/2/91 Picture framing mat boards

A control method and a system of fabrication for frames, mats and mountings, suitable for exhibiting, showing or displaying all manner and form of artwork, documents, photographs and illustrations, including but not limited to drawings, paintings, water colors, photographs, digital art, blueprints, renderings, prints, etchings, engravings, stock issues, currency, and such other various relatively flat objects and artwork or items that can be framed, hereinafter referred to collectively as artifacts.

Various frames have been used in the past to mount and display a variety of artwork and other relatively flat objects. Museums and other venues, where artifacts are put on display from time to time, are now and have been historically facing the problems associated with providing artifacts with adequate housing which assures their safe presentation in an aesthetically pleasing manner, while conforming to the standards of the exhibiting entity and the state of the art for preservation.

Resolving these problems normally involves custom framing each artifact at considerable expense and time delay, or restricting the sizes of artifacts considered for exhibitions. At the end of the display period the artifact returns to storage in the permanent collection, or if the artifact was on loan, it is returned to the lending institution. The substantial expenditure relating to custom framing the artifact, needs to be justified and amortized by the benefits derived from the duration of the exhibit.

In most venues, artifacts of diverse sizes and directional orientations are exhibited from time to time. When compared to conventional methods presently employed, the use of the Exhibit Framing System, which is designed specifically as a solution to effectively reuse resources while meeting requisite exhibition criteria. It provides the benefits as outlined below:

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

BENEFITS OF THE EXHIBITION FRAMING SYSTEM

1. Reduction of framing preparation costs. This unique and original concept reduces exhibit preparation framing costs to a heretofore unattainable level, by the purposive reuse of presentation components such as frames, glazing, backing support, hanging and fixation hardware and others. When subjected to normal care in handling, frames and other components may be reused for years and result in substantial economies compared to methods currently in use.
2. Enables exhibiting institutions to accept collections consisting of artifacts which are not currently framed and which ordinarily would not be considered for an exhibit due to the investment necessary to provide adequate housing for their protection while on view.
3. Reduction of preparation times. Exhibit preparation may be accomplished in days instead of weeks.
4. Use of the information processing control system, which is an integral part of the invention, reduces the need for reliance on trained technical personnel to make requisite calculations and reduces errors along with the resulting waste of materials and time.
5. Use of the invention results in a unified, cohesive appearance throughout the exhibit. Aesthetically proportioned presentation mats both initially and in subsequent rotations of various artifacts.
6. Artifacts taken off display remain permanently protected by their reusable, standard size "book mat" housing.
7. Subsequent showings of previously displayed artifacts are achieved without additional expenditure.
8. Institutions may opt for using their in-house staff do the preparation work and retain artifacts to be exhibited on their premisses, or have the work performed by trained technicians at a supply source.
9. Lease or Purchase. A centralized supplier user of this invention may build an inventory of component frames and provide a Lease option of framing for occasional, temporary or

short term needs thus eliminating the need for investment by the exhibiting entity entirely. Purchase option results in ongoing savings for users.

10. Entities adopting the Exhibit Framing System may have the ability to calculate the needed frame sizes and mat border widths, by accessing the information processing control system located at the supply source remotely by modem and/or on line. Alternately, the software may be obtained for in house use.

11. Framing styles can be tailored to the preferences of the exhibiting entity and may include any and all manner of framing materials commonly in use, or adaptable to the purpose.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The Exhibit Framing System is an original concept and a systemic approach to framing exhibits, the object of which is the attainment of the results and the benefits as outlined above. Therefore, the preceding section titled *BENEFITS OF THE EXHIBITION FRAMING SYSTEM*, must be included hereunder as part of this summary.

An essential component of the Exhibit Framing System is an innovative information processing control system, or computer application program. This information processing control system automatically determines a "best fit" frame size based on the desired visible dimensions of the artwork, the desired mat border widths, available margins of the artifact and various other customizable parameters. The use of information processing control system saves hours of manual calculation and potentially eliminates common mistakes and errors in calculating framing measurements. These errors are commonplace in manual systems currently in use.

From the analysis of actual data accumulated in numerous exhibit rotations since 1996 for the purposes of this study, it was determined that a moderate number of client-specific "standard" size frames, when coupled with custom size mats, will accommodate better than 97% of all artwork. This fact gave rise to the original idea and subsequently the invention of a system which enables the purposeful repeated reuse of "standard"size frames with custom cut mats for incoming artifacts, thus eliminating the need for purchasing new frames for rotating exhibits. Following is a detailed consideration of the problems and their solution.

A In order to derive maximum benefit, it is necessary to limit the number of client specific "standard" sizes so as to make each frame size reusable over a broad range of artifact sizes, while preserving the visual integrity of a group of framed artifacts (the exhibit).

B To achieve this end, the Exhibit Framing System uses groups of "standard" sizes for small, medium and large size artifacts. It is entirely the choice of the individual using entity to determine the actual number of and magnitude of increments and the respective spacing separating each group of sizes. This would normally be dictated by budgetary considerations.

C For the purposes of this description the refined model will be described (Description of the Preferred Embodiment). As explained, it is merely one of an infinite number of possibilities, each applicable in certain special cases. Dimensions may be expressed in metric or imperial measure without any effect on the applicability of the system.

D The desired visible "sight" dimension of each artifact is measured. The shorter dimension is subtracted from the longer one, and the difference between the two is noted. One must preserve and translate this difference to the frame size, in order to have equal mat margins. For example let us assume a desired sight size of 14" high and 10" wide artifact. If a 3" margin is desired all around, the frame will need to be 20" in height and 16" in width, preserving the same 4" difference between its height and width as the sight size of the artifact.

E A 16" x 20" frame is sometimes referred to as a frame having 36 United Inches, abbreviated as 36 U.I., which is the semi-perimeter, or the length of the long side added to the length of the short side. One can conceive of other frame sizes which have also 36 U.I. When one considers only full inch increments for frame side dimensions, the possibilities range from a 18"x18" square frame, to a 1"x35" elongated rectangle, in each case the sum of two adjacent sides equaling 36 inches; or 36 U.I..

F Returning to our arbitrarily selected example above, of a 3" mat margin, the short side of a frame could be no shorter than twice the mat width, i.e., 2" x 3" = 6". This reduces the range of

frame sizes to a range between 18" x 18" and 6" x 30". These frame sizes correspond to artifacts with desired visible dimensions which range between 12" x 12" square, to an artifact 24" long and no short dimension. Stated in other terms, the difference between the dimensions of the long and short sides ranges from 0" to 24" and these twelve frame sizes will accommodate all possible sizes of artifacts in this range, both vertical and horizontal, with mat border widths fractionally varying about the nominal 3" as specified.

G In practice, the vast majority of artifacts vary in a much more restricted range of difference between the short and long dimensions; there are statistical peaks around the photographic standard sizes, art material standard sizes, the "Golden Mean" ratio and the square format. These statistical peaks translate proportionately to larger sizes as well, making the Exhibit Framing System an invention that is broadly applicable.

H As referenced in sections B, C and D above, the Exhibit Framing System uses groups of "standard" sizes for small, medium and large size pictures. In the Preferred Embodiment, the groups of "standard" sizes were spaced at 6 U.I. increments; i.e. 36 U.I., 42 U.I., 48 U.I., 54 U.I., 60 U.I., 66 U.I., etc.,. This spacing presented an acceptable compromise between the allowable variance of mat border widths and the number of actual frames needed to accommodate a broad range of artwork. It should be noted, that in most exhibits it was found to be desirable for security reasons to frame even smaller artifacts in frames no smaller than 36 U.I., however there is no technical reason to consider this a lower limit.

I It must be emphasized, that any and all specifications such as sizes, groups of sizes, mat border widths and others mentioned herein, are arbitrary and are purely offered to illustrate the Method of the invention. The Exhibit Framing System's flexibility permits the customization of all parameters to suit individual needs and preferences.

J Continuing the details of the calculation method from D above. Some general details pertaining to the entire exhibit or group of artifacts need to be specified prior to running the

program.

These details determine the general appearance of the exhibit are as follows: the approximate desired mat margins and bottom offset information if any.

The information processing control system uses these parameters in calculating the best-fit size for each artifact.

As the desired sight dimensions are input, the difference between the long and short dimensions is calculated. The sum of these dimensions is also calculated and is augmented by the desired border widths and bottom offset (if any) information. The numbers resulting from these calculation are rounded to the closest client specific "standard" United Inch grouping.

Upon determining this grouping, a calculation is made, using the input parameters that are outlined at the beginning of this paragraph, in order to determine the actual size of the needed frame. Once the frame size is known, subtracting the actual sight size from the frame size and making allowance for bottom offset if any, the actual mat borders are easily calculated and permit the entire package to be fabricated.

K The process is the same when exhibits are rotated. Desired sight sizes are input and the best-fit "standard" frame is determined along with the resulting mat border widths. If the requisite frame is on hand, the mat is cut to fit the artifact and it is ready for framing.

Should the ideal size frame not be available, by inputting available frame sizes into the information processing control system, one can easily determine the suitability of each frame, (or lack thereof) and the resulting mat border widths needed to accommodate the artifact in this compromise frame.

L At the end of the exhibition, artifacts remain in their respective protective mats for easier storage or transportation. Works returning to permanent collection will benefit by the protection afforded by the archival mats and will be ready for future showings in "standard" size frames. Works on loan may be returned matted to their lending institutions.

M The Exhibit Framing System may also be used by entities with only occasional need for

frames, as it may be made available through a Rental or Lease Program.

SUMMARY

Once the decision is made to adopt the standards of the Exhibit Framing System, it may be implemented at the exhibiting institution's own pace and budgetary constraints. As components accumulate, the savings realized by reusing frames compound.

Implementation of the Exhibit Framing System can result in substantial reduction exhibit preparation framing costs.

Institutions can have both a higher percentage of their permanent collection on view at any given time and host frequently rotating thematic shows. The Exhibit Framing System concept will accomplish this in a cost effective and aesthetically pleasing way.